ISSUE ON RACE

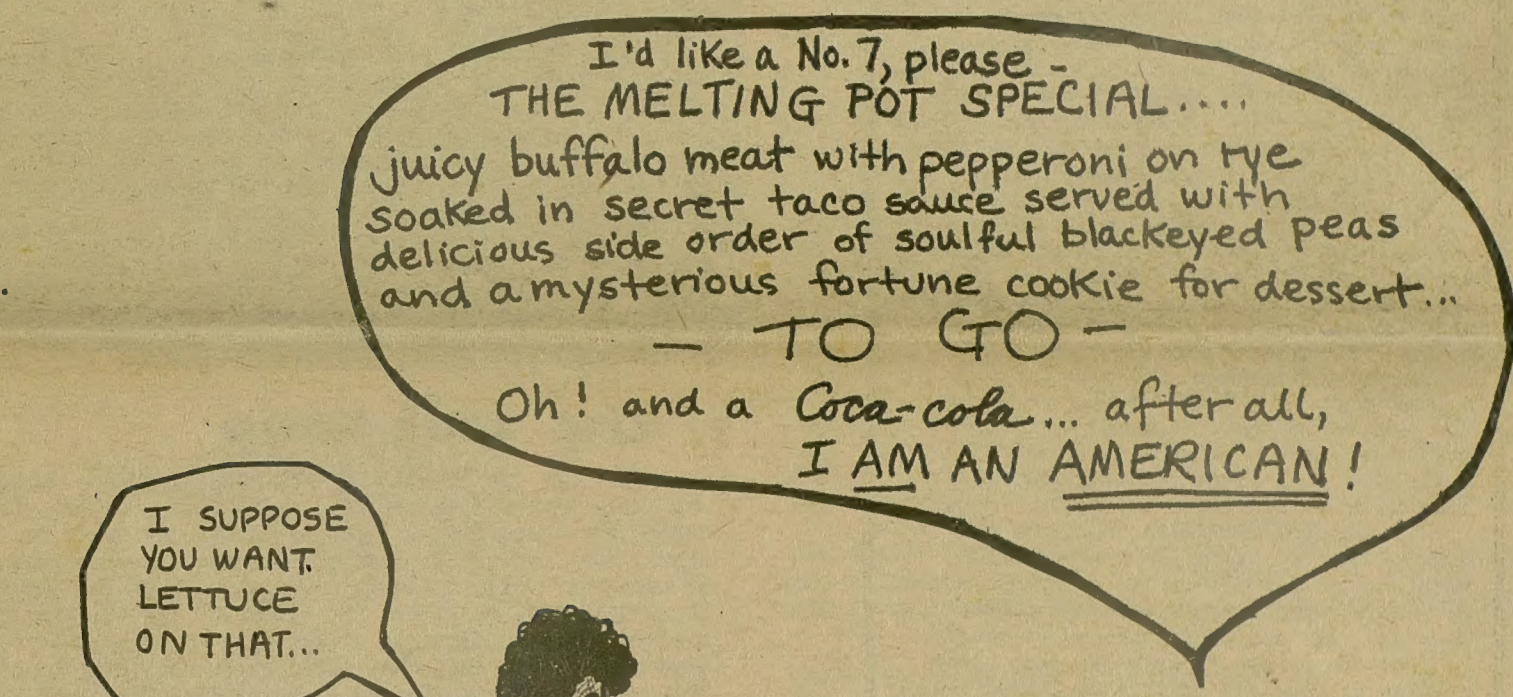
AIN'T I A WOMAN?

¿No soy una mujer?

Vol. 4
No. 2
May 1974

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE of FUCKOVER

OVER 3 BILLION SERVED DAILY


I'd like a No. 7, please -
THE MELTING POT SPECIAL....
juicy buffalo meat with pepperoni on rye soaked in secret taco sauce served with delicious side order of soulful blackeyed peas and a mysterious fortune cookie for dessert...
- TO GO -
Oh! and a Coca-cola... after all, I AM AN AMERICAN!
I SUPPOSE YOU WANT LETTUCE ON THAT...
IH

published by the
¿NSUM? collective

the melting pot:

It has been over six months since I came out to race and decided to use the paper as an outlet for my feelings about race. Much has changed since I got the idea to slap a few thoughts down into an issue. So much that I don't even recognize the person I was when I got the idea in the first place. Although there's been some glimmerings of hope, nothing much has changed about the isolation for third world dykes in this town, such as we are. The only way I can cope with race in a big way is to talk about the melting pot, when I know I am talking to a white audience, for the most part. I feel the urgency of placing race into a larger framework that includes white people. I want to see the whole spectrum, being a member of some portion of it that is not well understood. In my thinking this is what I've come up with. Because I am middle class and I pass, less direct racial oppression has come my way than the cultural elitism of language fuckovers and the hatred of someone who is different but not different enough to seem dangerous. Being caught between conflicting cultures is something I understand from my gut.

I have tried to get different women of color to work on this issue. Two of them said they didn't want to work on a white women's paper, but I have been given full control of copy and layout. So you're looking at the work of one still white-oriented halfbreed's work, with the help of her mulatto friend.

I hate to mislead anyone into thinking they're seeing this paper deal with race in any real constructive way, because there's so much that's unclear and misunderstood by me, and so many better people to hear the real story from. I have yet to come across reading material about women of color much less dykes of color that satisfies my desire to learn and grow.

I have done what I've done here because I want so badly for someone who's been lied to like I have to be spared some of the pain and confusion, though I haven't done too well at getting around it myself. If just one person figures out that their problem is race (if it is) then I will feel like I've gotten somewhere.

So here it is, the race issue, in a new format because we're printing the paper ourselves at the Iowa City Women's Press.

Rosa, from the ¿NSUM? collective

background

Ever since I remembered from social studies class that there is such a thing as the melting pot I have been fascinated by the perversity of the idea. And in thinking about race, which I have been doing for some months now, I see how my experiences fit into that sick idea. The melting pot idea really boomed with the beginning of the United States of America (and that's what I mean when I say America) because so many different people emigrated to this new land. Since the Indians didn't count to the fuckers who started this country, they had to begin a culture. They borrowed heavily from the fuckers that preceded them, like the English and the Spaniards, where they got the idea of importing black people. They borrowed some decadence from the French and with those brilliant ideas to guide them, they set out to see how many people they could exploit. And they certainly did a fine job of ripping everybody off.

the races

Now to define the races. As the old standard "Jesus loves the little children" points out, the races have been traditionally defined as red and yellow, black and white. I have some quarrel with this. For one thing brown people have begun distinguishing themselves as a race in the Joonited Estates, as my relatives would call it. Chicanismo, (the Chicano movement) helped me greatly in understanding that I should consider myself non-white. The number of Chicanos whose hands I had to keep out of my pants on the way to this discovery is painful to remember. I have known for a long time that there was a word for "white" in Spanish (guero, "blonde"). Remembering things like that helped me see that it was there all along, the racial difference I mean. Not to mention that poor brown people have replaced the "freed" blacks as exploitable farm labor, with the whites not even having to feel guilty about looking at a black face.

The notion of Third World people allows Arabs to consider themselves non-white, as they are. That term expands race (as it should be expanded) to include peoples of all those small and not so small islands like the Filipinos. And the Jews, who have been treated as a race, should be considered non-white in my opinion, regardless of the fact that there are Jews who have really "made it big" and the fact that Israel holds its own as an imperialistic power.

The only way it seems to describe in a broad way the American non-white experience is to think of it in terms of the melting pot. The natural order of things (whatever that would have been) has been tampered with permanently by the killing off of the Indians and the importation of black people to Western countries for purposes of slavery, beginning in Cuba for instance in 1524.

I think the white people never really expected black people to "melt". I don't think they considered them people. That's why I have always enjoyed the theory about how George Washington died. According to some black author, Washington caught pneumonia from slipping out to the slave quarters one winter night to fuck his favorite black woman.

the soft soap

The ones the melting pot was ready for were immigrants who spoke other languages, had conflicting customs, religion, taste for food, etc. To bring some kind of order to the chaos, they decided instead of changing anything about themselves, they would unite and neutralize (spelled SMASH) all these different cultures. And if any of the cultures complained they had cleverly picked up a thing or two from everyone's culture that they could throw back at them and say "here, aren't you satisfied with this?" And believe me, these crumbs are pretty crummy. Their plans for you are obvious when you first get here. If you have another language you immediately learn to be ashamed of it. If you do real good and are real lucky (read PRIVILEGED) you may lose the title of alien and become "naturalized". But you'll never be all-American enough. Then you can sit back and watch your TV (if you have one) deal you such offensive shit as: a mockout of Kung Fu (which is bad enough on its own) for Seven-up, a cat doing an Americanized chacha that goes chow-chow-chow for Purina cat chow; black people sprinkled throughout TV with shit-eating grins on their faces; Enzo Stuarti insulting Italian people with "that's-a nice-a sauce."

If you're a kid in school you can pick up some really offensive jokes before you understand that they're funny only if you are a racist or a cultural elitist: things like Bohemian or Polack IQ test jokes, slanty eye jokes, Rastus and Liza jokes, rotsa ruck, yes, we have no bananas, and even poems like:

Roses are reddish
Violets are bluish
if it weren't for Christmas
we'd all be Jewish.

Enough of this. It's just that everyday I am bombarded with this shit and each time I hear it it socks me in the stomach. No matter how much I try to become a militant non-offensive non-white person I am steeped to the gills with "American" (spelled RIP US ALL OFF) culture. IT'S A PLOT! And a damn well organized one at that.

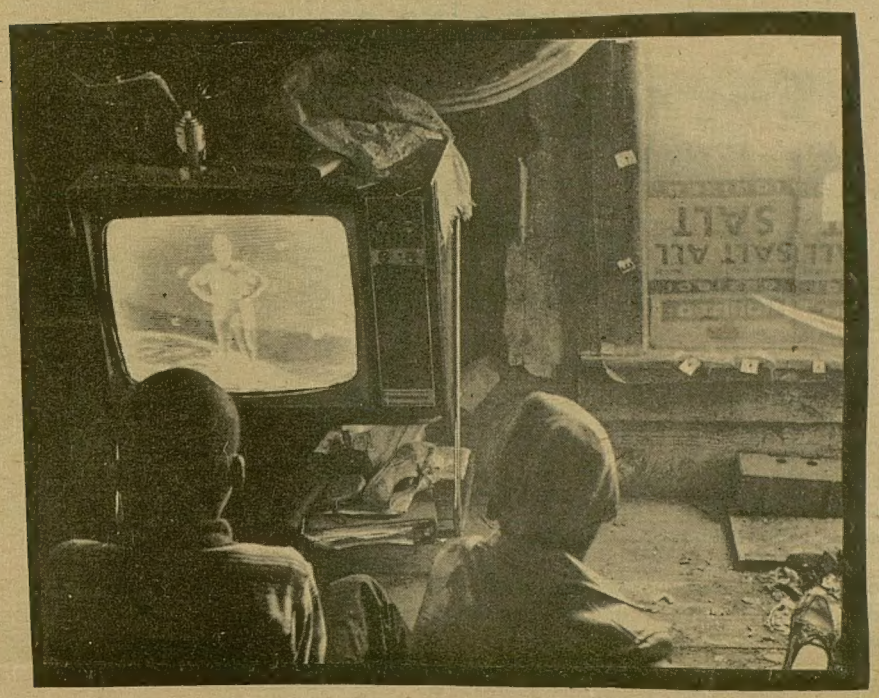
when will it boil?

Now with this kind of coverage in the media, it's no wonder that people of color or an unpopular culture marry Americans as soon as they can.

This, as I see it, is where the races and cultures part, because sooner or later the other white cultures do assimilate in some kind of way. But the non-white people, especially those races that have a heavy black influence, remain outside the sphere of acceptability. Although there's still something "acceptable" to some degree about those that are not black. I cannot judge too well about the ranking of the races because such a large percentage of them are not middle class, and I am a very privileged person of color.

Haitian refugees to the US are denied admittance because most are black and the government that took power is right-wing enough for American standards. Do you think anything's gotten better with such "old" topics as Bangladesh,Laos, Korea,etc.,etc?

The melting pot disgusts me as a Third World dyke. We have all been trained to be such monsters that the only way to get rid of racism and cultural elitism is the way to get rid of all the other oppressions-total revolution. This information is to help people figure out what is oppressive about themselves and what they need to change or recognize. I hope it does that.



the hard facts

Her are some of my favorite examples of the melting pot in action:

Remember Tonto,that lovable asshole? "Tonto" is the Spanish word for 'fool', so that only brown people know that the Indian is being slurred. Divide and conquer.....

My cousin,a Cuban refugee, found herself in American high school knowing almost no English. Classes were in English naturally,so she had to deal with that,BUT she was also required to take a foreign language. Spanish was her native language so that didn't count. She was forced to take French. She dropped out.

Brown working and lower class kids in Texas learn not to use Spanish in school on the first day when they get beat up for for doing it.

The now mayor of New York City was asked during his campaign about what he was going to do about the fact that NYC was a bilingual city. His answer was that he would make every attempt to make sure everyone learned English.

Anyway it's real clear to me why people of color have such a hard time communicating with each other thanks to the melting pot, and why too working class whites and non-whites feel such antagonism toward each other.

While the melting pot is cooking up these stereotypes to disembowel everyone's history, they're also "packaging" images for Viet Nam, Africa, Latin America, etc.

Foreign countries have come to be something of a joke. The real problems of real people become just another Excedrin headache for America, according to the 6 o'clock news.

What's happening in Third World countries now is actually so bad the truth comes as shock to even the most distrustful of the American dream. Dole pineapple just collapsed Hawaii's economy and moved to another island where labor is 20 cents an hour. Viet Nam bleeds on unnoticed now. Famine plagues Africa. The bananeros (banana plantation owners) strengthen their stronghold in South America daily.

my problem

You know your problem's race

when your father is ridiculed for his lousy English
even though he's a rich fucker
when the kids yell "We still like you anyway"
even though they're running away from you
when the white relatives treat you like shit
even though your mother's white
when your grandmother makes your father stay on the porch
even though it's 5 below outside
when Spanish is the secret code you remember
even though it's sometimes dangerous to use it
when white people say Spanish is easy
even though they can't speak it
when white people ask you to translate their Mexican shirts
even though they don't need to know what they say
when Ricky Ricardo is someone you identify with
even though he makes you sick
when you're called "a dark beauty"
even though you're treated as if you are white
when you're asked your opinion of the Frito Bandito
even though everybody thinks he's an asshole
when the latin relatives think of themselves as white
even though they call you "halfbreed"
when white people think of you as an interesting cultural experience
even though they wouldn't want their sister to marry one
when white people say "are you Spanish?"
even though you're latin and only you dig that difference.

You'd like to be able to explain that
when racist white people want to tell you
their truly reactionary feelings about race
BECAUSE YOU PASS
and that makes them
so much more comfortable
because everybody knows
you have the option to cop out.

Although you regret that you do
because you feel
the difference.

You're looking for something
nobody has given you,
certainly nobody white,
nobody full-blooded.
Maybe another halfbreed could,
although they haven't yet.
Another spic halfbreed dyke?
Well certainly if you could find her
and get her to stick around
and still remember what you have to say...
Then maybe you could explode
and let loose your best thoughts
instead of getting that familiar headache,
that compact ball of stifled feelings,
that no Excedrin can cure
because it hurts you all the way down to your gut.

SANGRE GRITA

sangre grita
raza bronce expira
bursting out
many tremble
canto y lloro
es mi gente
es mi raza
yo los quiero
you can tremble
i will live
soy morena

por Vivian Zermeño Ruiz
from "El Ombligo de Atzlán"

translation:

sangre grita is the Aztec cry of blood before cutting someone's heart out

raza bronce expira - a bronze race comes to life

canto y lloro - singing and crying

es mi gente - this is my people.

es mi raza - this is my race

yo los quiero - i love them

soy morena - i am a brown woman

THE EARTH IS A SATELLITE OF THE MOON

Leonel Rugama

In Case I Don't Make It To Tomorrow

Attention all halfbreeds!
Tired of feeling misunderstood?
Tired of having no box to check
but other?
Tired of trying not to notice that
that you don't fit in anywhere?

After all that buildup
I have no easy solution.
I can only answer "so am I"
to all those questions.

If it would help
make a button that says
"I am the product
of an interracial marriage."
So next time you're caught
between the two worlds
you can skip the song and dance
about how your father's a this
and your mother's a that, so there!

As for the loneliness
I have no solutions.

The apollo 2 cost more than the apollo 1
the apollo 1 cost enough.

The apollo 3 cost more than the apollo 2
the apollo 2 cost more than the apollo 1
the apollo 1 cost enough.

The apollo 4 cost more than the apollo 3
the apollo 3 cost more than the apollo 2
the apollo 2 cost more than the apollo 1
the apollo 1 cost enough.

The apollo 8 cost a whole lot but you didn't feel it
because the astronauts were protestants
they read the bible from the moon,
bringing glad tidings to all christians
and Pope Paul VI blessed them when they returned.

The apollo 9 cost more than all the rest together
including the apollo 1 which cost enough.

The great-grandparents of the people of Acahualinca
were less hungry than the grandparents,
The great-grandparents died of hunger.

The grandparents of the people of Acahualinca were less hungry
than the parents.
The grandparents died of hunger.

The parents of the people of Acahualinca were less hungry than
the people who live there now.
The parents died of hunger.

The people of Acahualinca are less hungry than their children.
The children of the people of Acahualinca are born dead from hunger,
and they're hungry at birth, to die of hunger.

The people of Acahualinca die of hunger.

Blessed be the poor, for they shall inherit the moon.

from THIS GREAT PEOPLE HAS SAID "ENOUGH!"
AND HAS BEGUN TO MOVE...

If you would like a copy of this fine
collection from the struggles in Latin
America, it's 50¢ from:
PEOPLE'S PRESS
968 Valencia Street
San Francisco, CA. 94110

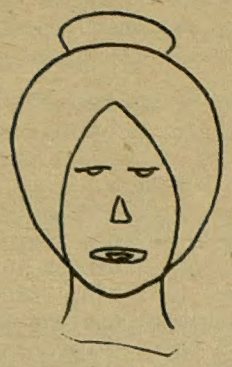
Dear Rosa,

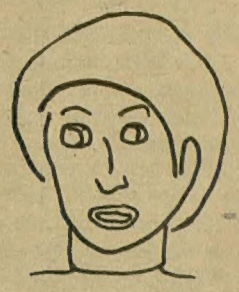
Thank you for your letter. You're right, being hesitant to speak to you is pigshit. About two years ago my color consciousness received its first big jolt, but with a little help from my friends I put it away. After the workshop on minority health needs and racism I was visibly shaken- I think because it was the first overt step I had taken and also because I was accepted. Your coming out to color has been influential in my thinking again about myself. Growing up in an Italian ghetto is what shielded me from thinking of myself as "Black" in the racial sense although I was color conscious as a kid. I thought everyone found themselves in conversations about national origin. I kept reinforcing being Siciliana i.e. Italian but white because I was asked so fucking often what my origins were. I had to come to the midwest where there are few black and brown folks to begin thinking about it again. See usually people think I'm Spanish or Puerto Rican or Chicana so I thought I really was answering their question (and my own) if I said no. I've just realized that my mother's mother was Black. My mother who was born and grew up for 35 years in an Italian ghetto (various "projects") might not acknowledge that- god knows maybe she would if she had a chance. My darker brother was often "mistaken" or recognized as Black.

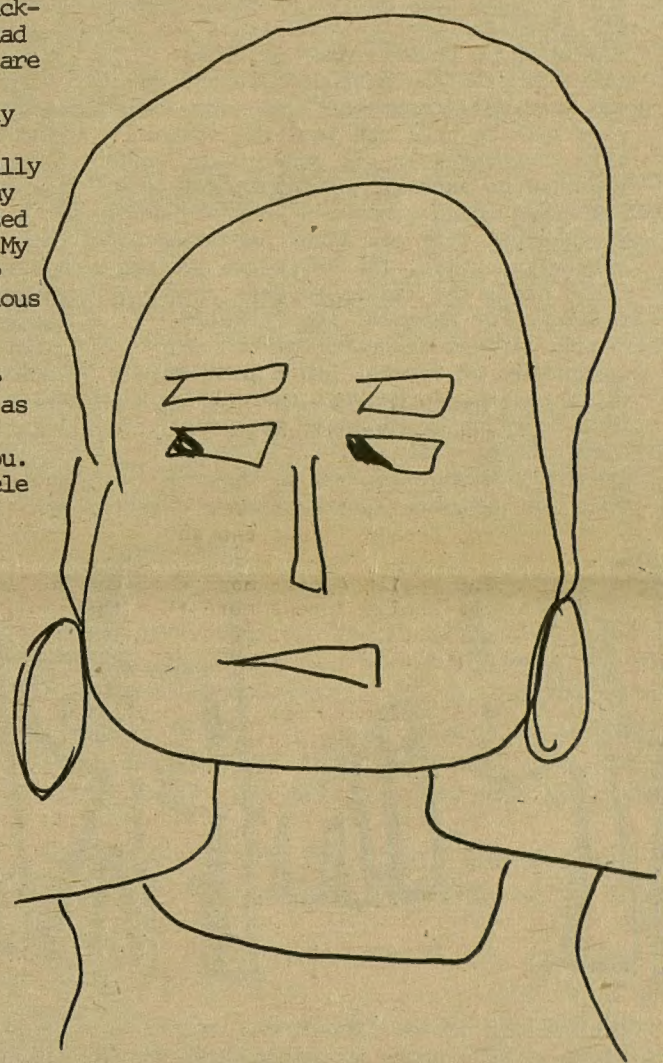
Jesus yes I want to talk to you. I don't know about writing an article with you, but I'd like to at least help and think with you.

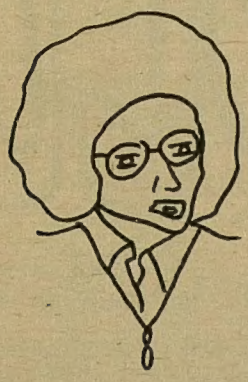
Yes respectfully
Bosco

Rosa is a halfblood Cuban middle-class dyke and Bosco is a working-class mulatto old dyke.









The vocabulary of oppression that I know best concerns lesbianism, but I don't know if that will be appropriate or adequate for what I've been thinking about. I am in the closet about race. Usually, but not always, I can pass without effort. So timidly did I begin coming out to race this time around (I've sort of made one-night stands before), that the glaze-over-the-eyes of the few friends I mentioned it to, the fresh embarassment, general weirdness of being in an "all-white" conversation about race would have been enough to send me back to the closet if it wasn't for a little group that is trying to talk about this subject.

What I mean by one night stands is the other occasions in my life when I tried to make sense of my racial origins. This usually took the form of saying to someone who I had grown to trust that I had Black blood in me, or taking the roundabout route I would pose the question- "what does it mean that I have Black blood in me (and can/do pass white?)" No reaction was sometimes the reaction--as though I hadn't uttered a word. A brief response which was the rough equivalent of "isn't that quaint." Or some subtle dismissal of the subject because "oh yeah, we're all of mixed blood." TO SOME EXTENT I HAVE INTERNALIZED ALL THREE RESPONSES. I suppose those close friends who I spoke to about it were trying to tell me something like "you're the same to me", but I think what my attempts were all about was something like "I'm not the same to me", or "you're not the same to me."

For several months I've been writing to and talking to friends of color (the expression "of color" feels very awkward to me, but I want to include Black and Brown friends as well as mulatto friends) about my family, my childhood consciousness of race and how, why, and when I pass. Some of the things I've been thinking more about are racism, color oppression and geography; what passing means; how I relate to people who suffer color oppression. This is all I can write about it so far.

poetry, fiction, graphics

The Common Woman
Box 1423
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

BAYE in FRISCO

WARNING: To all those Jewish lesbians across the country who are thinking of splitting to San Francisco, renowned hotbed of gay life, DON'T. THIS PLACE AIN'T KOSHER!

There we were, an integrated gang of working class lesbians, living unhappily in Boston. After a visit one summer to S.F. it seemed like just the place to be: money seemed to flow, or at least no one seemed to have to work much... there were more girls' bars in town than one could hit in a week of heavy partying...there was a Jewish lesbian collective meeting weekly...there seemed like a lot of room to do all kinds of politics.

And we just weren't making it in Boston. The women's movement was so far gone that they had a nazi on the coordinating committee of the women's center who waved "Mein Kampf" around. I was forced once again to do topless dancing to make a few pennies, an activity which is akin (but much more ominous) to being a gymnast in a toilet. Kathy Queer was festering at $1.65/hr at the YWCA, and even the fact that she brought out her boss couldn't hide the meagre financial fulfillments. Claire had spent a couple of years looking for an alternate employment opportunity to the fish factory in Provincetown with no success. The lesbian scene in Boston consisted of one schlocky bar which also served to house entertainment facilities for every local voyeur, pervert, asshole and fool in town. Meeting new women was getting so tough that I was going out with a Catholic youngster whose overgrown cross would scratch my delicate bosom at night.

So we packed up and fled out here with dreams of "being discovered" and "making it big" in the wide open west curdling in our brains. After 11 days of driving 13 hrs/day through the deepest South, passing so many billboards for Christ that Christianity seemed the whole reason for existence in the South, we finally arrived in San Francisco to begin the complete downfall of our lives, our hopes, and what few feelings of well-being this society had thus far allowed us.

Before I go on to illustrate the atmosphere out here that I find so revolting, I want to run down my feelings about Christianity so that folks will know just where I'm speeking from. I am anti-Christian. I think that Christianity is one of the most evil and dangerous phenomenons to infect society. I think that being pro-Christian has always meant being anti-Semitic and that Christians have set up an us/them dichotomy (in other words, it's either you or me, one of us has to go) which Jews and other non-Christians can't ignore. I myself accept it wholeheartedly because I think it's quite true. What Christianity has been in this world is something that I cannot and will not live with. It has been a consistently counter-revolutionary and anti-people force.

Now I want to distinguish between Christian people and Christianity, because there is an important distinction. Just like this country is an imperialist/capitalist nation doesn't mean that every person in it is a pig. The Vietnamese were always careful to distinguish between the ruling classes in American government and the American people. And I want to make those divisions too, because Christianity is first and foremost an industry. And like any big business you've got your bosses and your workers. The masses of Christians are oppressed people whose lives are so fucked up by poverty and repression that the promise of heaven seems about the best investment they can make. When your life is hell and you are continually frustrated in all your goals, working towards another more ephemeral success (one which you won't know if you've blown until it's too late) seems the only alternative. The Christian ruling class needs the masses to keep them rolling. For example, the Catholic church has got to be one of the major landowners of Greece. Don't think that those popes and the boys that assist them (cardinals, bishops, etc) could afford those fancy satin & velvet dresses without millions of collections from the laboring masses. Remember that dear friend of the Kennedys',Cardinal Cushing? He was one of the biggest slumlords in Boston. I think that most Christians are as oppressed by Christianity as most non-Christians. The only place that we working class Jews are in conflict with the working class Christians is in the anti-Semitic education they recieve and often adopt as their own.

In our gang we have several ex-Catholics and they have really hipped me to the specific forms of anti-Semitism that they had shoved down their throats throughout their Catholic school education. They are taught a lot of crap about us "Christ-killers" and too often they never even meet a Jew until it's too late to counter their indoctrination. What has to happen is revolution. Only a revolutionary perspective that includes anti-Christianity among oppressed people of all religions can win.

The other thing I want to make clear is that I think anti-Semitism is a form of racism. And Judaism is a race. Despite the fact that there are Jews of every color,Jews are a single race. The history of our people has been one of fighting and surviving heavy racism against us. We are perceived as and persecuted as a race by anti-Semites. Religion has nothing to do with it. All those Jews who tried to convert to escape the German holocaust during W.W.II can attest to that fact (if any were alive). If there is Jewishness in your blood, you are chopped as a Jew. No matter that you haven't been in a synagogue since your brother's bar mitzphah. No matter that you are an atheist. If your blood is Jewish you die as a Jew. We are a race of people, many of whom share a common religion. We are a race of people many of whom share a common culture. But even if you are a hippy eastern meditation freak, if your mother was Jewish, you're going to get the screw during the same pogrom that gets your mother's rabbi. Because we are a race of people ALL of whom share the same history.

Now, with that set of politics in mind, let me run down an example of the kind of welcome we received by our California neighbors. Shortly after arriving was the 25th anniversary of Israel and we heard all over the radio of a big fair to be held in celebration. Me and Claire, the other Jewish woman in our gang, took off to mix with our folks. The first booth we entered featured a giant Israeli flag with a big cross (as in Christianity) superimposed on it. The people behind the booth were passing out leaflets advertizing a movie which they had made on Israel to be shown at their evangelical church. Evangelical, you remember, means pushy. They're the ones who are into pushing conversion on all the rest of us heathen unwashed.

Right away we were into a hostile confrontation and a bit confused as to who the hell this fair was for. We stopped one of the officials of the fair and his defense was that they wanted to allow for as "broad" a range of participation as possible. I told him that his Jewish consciousness must be stuck in his wallet between his credit cards or something and that he was really going a little far in courting gentile approval.

Figuring to placate us; he led us off to the Jewish Defense League booth where we figured maybe to get hipped to something, anything, radical going down at this affair. We were wearing our Jewish lesbian buttons (lavender women's symbol with a Star of David inside) and right away some punky JDLer asked if they were Jews for Jesus emblems. The fucker didn't even recognize the women's symbol! After threatening the well-being of his genitalia, he readjusted his glasses and began to sweat. We told him we were Jewish dykes

TRAYF in FRISCO-changes

The author of this article is halfway across the country from the paper, and that makes for a bad situation. She just sent in some last minute corrections, and her politics have changed enough that we felt we had to print them but we had just about finished the issue. So here are her inserts, explaining her change of politics. We regret that they couldn't have been added to the article itself.

FIRST INSERT: Page 6, bottom half of column 2. 'The other thing I want to make clear' down to 'Now with that set of politics in mind' should be scratched and the following should be added:

The other thing I want to make clear is that I believe that anti-Semitism is an oppression that in some ways defied traditional categories, but which combines elements of racism and religious presecution. The Jews are a people. Although we come in every color and class, our history is one of fighting and surviving a vicious specific long-ranging hatred, experienced by no other people in the world other than, perhaps, the Gypsie people. Those of our people who are third-world -- black, asian, semitic -- additionally suffer skin-defined racism from the white people of the world. But those of us who are Ashkenazyk -- European white -- also suffer at the hands of the Aryans.

Both religious persecution and racism are used as excuses by anti-semites for screwing us. In 1492 King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella ordered all the Jews who had been living in Spain for many generations, to get behind the state Christian religion or to get out. In that one moment 700,000 Jews had to split quick. The guise was religion but the reality was more, since it was not only religious or even believing Jews who had to go, but all Jews as defined by blood. In 1939 Hitler began his genocide of our people because we were an "inferior race." Under the mantle of race differences the Jews were exterminated. Not only Jews of color, but also the white, blond-haired, blue-eyed versions. Foolishly, many Jews of Nazi Germany tried through conversion to Christianity to escape that fate and they could attest to the fact (if any were alive) that devout even fanatical Christianity does nothing for a Jew if she is born of Jewish blood.

So no matter if it comes down as a religious or a racial matter. Neither factor adequately defines either the basis of our dispised status or of our Peoplehood. It is something more than both: a shared history, a shared flight, a shared struggle.

We are a people many of whom share a common culture, a common religion. But even if you are a hippy eastern meditation freak, if your mother was Jewish you're going to get wiped during the same pogrom that gets your mother's rabbi. No matter if you haven't been in a synogogue since your brother's bar mitzpha. No matter that you are a communist atheist. If your blood is Jewish, you die as a Jew.

SECOND INSERT: Page 7, column 3, after the first three lines and before the paragraph that begins 'Being in San Francisco...' Nothing is omitted.

But the Christian religious fanatics of 1973 are nothing compared to their more political bretheren who have surfaced now in 1974. The Nazi's. Under the name National Socialist White People's Party, the nazi's have picked San Francisco as the city to focus their seemingly new-found energies upon. They started turning up several months ago when we first saw a blurb in the paper with a picture of a party higher-up who had been transferred to S.F. to begin really building up the National Socialist White People's Party (hereafter referred to as the Verywhite Party) because they felt that this city was ripe for their kind of politics. They cited the militant third world communities and the hippies and decadents (read: homosexuals) out here who are giving decent white people a hard time. He further stated that things looked so good that they planned to run candidates in the next election and they had serious hopes for victory. Said the whiteman, for every member willing to identify himself as a member, there were at least 100 more less vocal folks. And I'm sure he was not overestimating.

Since that time, the facists have moved, with frightening frequency, to the front pages. The S.F. School Board has been having open meetings to air the question of bussing school children. At the first meeting that the verywhite Party turned up, in full Nazi uniforms with swasticka armbands, a politically active black woman teacher, Yvonne Golden, was at the microphone. When the facists, with their line "Boating not bussing" (to Africa, we assume), began disrupting with their racist jive, Ms. Golden asked that the people escort these fools so they could continue with business. The facists attacked their escorts violently, the police arrived, and several people were arrested. None of the facists, mind you, but a number of radicals there to support black rights. A week later, an indictment came down citing Ms. Golden with attempting to foment a riot!

At the next meeting, while a nazi was on the mike spewing his bile, a member of JDL jumped up to cry "Never Again." He was arrested. They have since appeared at another meeting where their pictures were taken for the front page: 4 men and 1 wo-

man, fully uniformed. Someone recognized the woman, who turned out to be a desk-clerk member of the S.F. Police Dep't. When confronted with this atrocity, the Police Dep't dismissed it with a statement to the effect that the Dep't contains people of many different political views: John Birchers, Communists, and Verywhite People. As yet, no one has been able to contact these police communists.

Now, thanks to the Verywhite People's Party, we have a new evening entertainment: Dial-A-Nazi. By calling a number you are able to hear various recorded messages from their Party. Most of them concern Jews, many are about Blacks, and often they try to tie the two in together. The first one I dialed in for described the ADL (Anti-Defamation League) as a wing of Bnai Brith, an exclusive Jewish male orgainisation which was a member of the International Zionist Conspiracy which is the military arm of Israel. Won't my Aunt Eleanor be surprised!

The next message I heard said that the Jews were pushing pornography (same charge Hitler made a few years back) and were behind the violence of the Black community because it was the Jews who funded and controlled all those new Black movies such as "Shaft" which encouraged Blacks to slaughter whites. One tape said that it was the Jews who owned all the publishing companies and who were responsible for the censorship in this country. Thus Jews were preventing Verywhite People from reading each other's volumes.

The latest message from these verywhites that I have had the burden of hearing talked directly to community issues. Said they: "The Jews think that with the energy crisis there won't be any power to operate the ovens. They should be reminded of the adage: Where there's a will, there's a way."

Now what could be clearer?

When confronted with the obscenity of these recorded messages, the phone company referred to the constitutional right of freedom of speech. We wonder where these constitutionalists at Bell Tell are when homosexual groups across the nation unsuccessfully try to list their organizations in the Yellow Pages or even get a number under a gay name, let alone present positive messages of woman-love over their lines.

When I try to talk to my mother about the snow-balling growth of anti-semitism in this country, especially from my perspective out here in the West, they dismiss me with the excuse that there is always a wierdo fringe, always a few "ignorant" right-wingers. But this is not the case. The real case is that this country is fast building to a pogrom -- probably aimed at both Jews and Blacks -- at the very least.

The Verywhite Party does have 100 silent members to every one that is willing to go public. And these hundreds are getting less reticent all the time. The other day a Jewish sister was waiting for a bus on a main street in S.F. In bright daylight, a flat-truck passed with 10 fully uniformed swasticka-ed members of the Party in the back and 2 more in the cab. These people are patrolling our streets. They are members of our police department. They are members of our ruling class, our politicians, industrialists, teachers, etc.

Like Germany in the 30's, this country is fucked up. Like Germany the economy is unsteady, inflation is making the working people scared, the right is growing, the political "leadership" is in moral contradiction, the direction of the nation is up for grabs. This dangerously racist anti-semitic right is grabbing and grabbing fast. Certainly faster than the Jews are waking up.

Too many Jews are lulled by the promise of Amerika. The Jewish establishment is controlled by the middle & upper class Jews who are too comfortable to rock even a sinking boat. Many Jewish leftists are paralyzed by self-hate, born both of being a member of a dispised people and of a left that has tried to make the word Jew synonomous with the word imperialist. And working class Jews, our only real hope, are too busy in this time of recession hustling to survive that they haven't the time to see. Some Jews who are Jewish-proud are too privileged and racist to see that whatever comes down on Blacks will surely stomp us too.

For example, last week at the S.F. Jewish Community Center, a JDL'er told a dyke friend of mine that they encouraged the continuing involvement of Amerika in Cambodia because if the USA stays committed there, maybe they will also stay committed to Israel. This is support we do not want. This is a disgusting set of politics from a people who KNOW persecution & oppression, who know the necessity of owning land, of having a nation. These are ideas that can never win life & freedom for us.

(P.S. "Trayf" means unkosher.)

and what the hell was JDL doing about the anti-Semitic booths at the fair. They weren't doing nothing.

Suddenly we are descended upon by what felt like 7,000 mounted Cossacks, but turns out to be about 50 actual Jews for Jesus. It has always been my dearest fantasy that these Jews for Jesus are Christians who converted to Judaism who THEN became Jews for Jesus. My mistake. They were Jewish kids, frizzy haired, Ashenazah unmistakeable Jews. They were mostly men but some women; they were all dressed in blue jean jackets with "Jews for Jesus" sparkling in studs on the back. Some were adorned with such endearing slogans as "Christ made me Kosher." They were a complete drag.

But their whole action was so well coordinated that they drew the attention of every fair-goer in the place. They screamed and blew whistles and surrounded some unprepared JDLer, yelling indescernable incantations and causing such mayhem that we were freaked by the power they could wield. There's a whole megillah of them out here; half the walls of Berkeley are covered with their posters (and they're a bitch to scrape off).

Of course the reaction of the Jewish establishment, as represented by the officials at the fair, was that the JDLer MUST have provoked the Jews for Jesus kids in some manner. No amount of rapping about anti-Semitism and the fact that before every pogrom there is a movement towards conversion (rats leaving a sinking ship?) would convince them. It's these radicals and militants that cause the trouble. Same old tune. If that's what these people think of the inconsistent ineffectual JDL, how the hell are they ever going to deal with us revolutionary feminist dykes!?

San Francisco is a city of cults. You've got your Hari Krishna and your Maharah Ji and your Jehovah Witnesses and your Jews for Jesus and every shade of occult and religious whazoo imaginable. But it seems like it's mostly those Christians out on the streets, and pushing the hardest when that available face either looks Jewish or has a star around her neck. One day me and Claire, who is a dark Sephartic Jew, were zipping around our neighborhood when we were accosted by a couple of women from the "House of Man." This is a very rich collection of Christian wierdies who dress all in black, are all white, who live on the edge of the ghetto and push their do-goody kuk while buying up and inhabiting the best buildings in their block. These women were wearing huge crosses their fragile (but pure, I'm sure) shoulders could scarcely bear, and they stared at Claire like she hadn't bathed in a month and needed nothing more than their fiery light of salvation.

The Christians must have raced right out here to S.F. and bought up all the hilltops. S.F. is a city of hills and no matter where you live, your view (if you can afford one) includes the top of a hill. And the top of every hill sports a cross. A big one. Either these crosses are ringed with flashing lightbulbs or they are outright constructed of neon. They push themselves into your eyeballs before you have time to whisper a sh'mah. And the churches! Okay, so you have a church, and maybe a cross on it, some stained glass windows perhaps, but must you have big bright signs screaming CHRIST IS THE ONLY ANSWER, ONLY JESUS SAVES.

Sometimes you can excuse the Christians their excesses, the way they have been the frontrunners of colonialism and later imperialism, pushing their pulp on the colored peoples of the world. Sometimes (not often) you can try to forget that 6 million people were slaughtered in the name of their god just 30 yrs. ago, or that 9 million homosexuals were wiped out in the middle ages to save the "purity" of their faith. But it gets to be a bit much when every time you are in a traffic jam you have to stare at a bumper sticker that proclaims "Christ is the ONE way" with a menacing hand with one---just one---finger sticking up. Christianity has always felt it, but when they start saying that their way is the only way, then you know that those of us who don't rush out to get "saved" are bound to get sliced. They really mean it, that there is only room for one kind of people, and those people have NEVER been Jews.

1973 has been a big year for Christians with their Key 73 movement, an interdenominational Christian push for mass conversion. They have even honored the Jewish people with special literature for their Christian organizers to direct them in coping with our questions. In answer to the one they expect us to ask about how their ever-so-merciful god would allow something like the nazi holocaust, they are directed to remind us of god's words that those who deny Him will burn. Now how much clearer can their warning be?

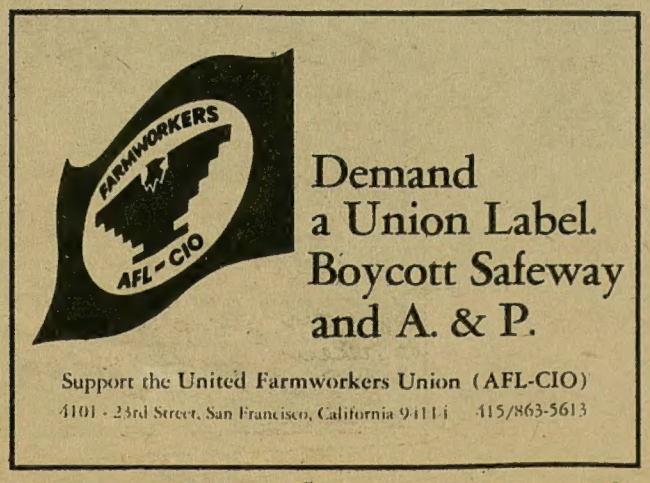
Being in San Francisco is like being in Mars, or at least that's how these people seem to see us. Having grown up in Pittsburgh surrounded by Jews and then living in Boston where there are several Jewish communities, being out here is like being submerged in a foreign substance. Finding a bagel and lox is harder than trying to get a minyan together in a lesbian bar. California women often ask me what kind of a name "Katz" is, finding it very exotic and unusual...? Every Jewish woman I meet either just moved here from NYC or maybe is from Connecticut. A number of women have asked Claire if she is Chicana.

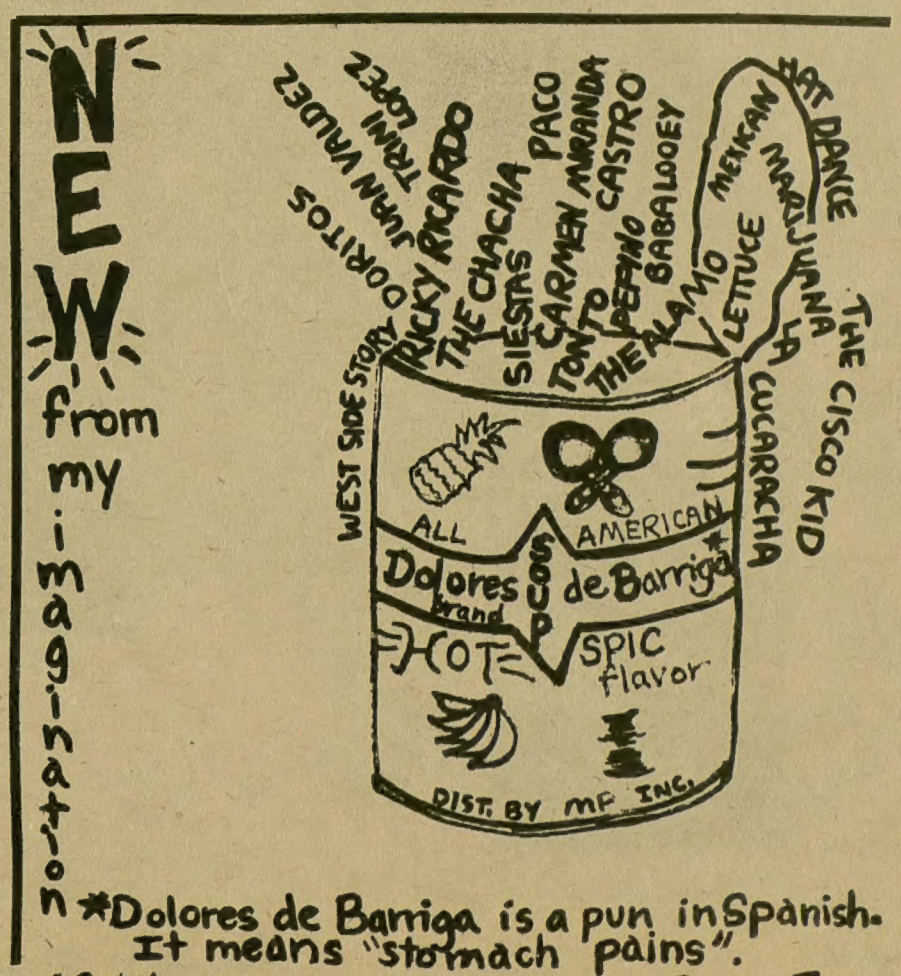
Jewish lesbian sisters, don't come out here expecting a familiar lesbian community, expecting to melt right into the expansive sisterhood. We are few and isolated out here. Plus getting Jewish food is harder than starving. As for all of our dreams, our reasons for moving out here: a lot of people don't work, it's true, but it's because their middle class daddies are still puking the privilege their way. For those of us who have to take care of our own business, there are few jobs and fewer that pay real gelt. There's NO money floating around, unless it's been floating in your family for a long time.

As for the movement, the Jewish gay movement consists of a group of gay men who are so straight they may pass for Watergate witnesses. And they certainly don't have too great a love for women, born out obnoxiously by repeated "Jewish mother" references. And the lesbian feminist movement is riddled with anti-Semitism and middle class bias.

Oh, and as for that great Jewish lesbian feminist collective, they all moved back to Staten Island and Manhattan because San Francisco is no place to be Jewish.

--- Katz





MALDICIÓN

Ayer estaba durmiendo
y tenía un sueño
sobre un hombre que odio.
Era un nightmare.
Él me enojó mucho.

QUIERO MATARLE...

Ese hombre
me dió mucha triteza.
Me chingaba.
Me usó.
Bebia mi sangre morena.
Perdí mi visión con él.

Ahora lo tengo.
Entonces
tengo un plan
para mi "galán".
Soy una marimacho.
No equivocas otra vez,
cabeza de caca.
Con mi rabia
voy a hacer algo...
un golpe fuerte en los juevos.
¡Consafos a ti!

¡Qué te vayas muy mal!.
Es lo que mereces.

CURSE

Last night I was sleeping
and I had a dream about a man I hate.
It was a nightmare.
He made me real mad.

I WANT TO KILL HIM...

This prick
gave me a lot of grief.
He fucked me.
He raped me.
He drank my brown blood.
I lost my vision with him.

But now I have it.
So
I have a plan for
for my "white knight".
I am a lesbian.
Don't make the same mistake,
shithead.
With my anger
I'm going to do something..
a swift kick in the balls.
Take all your grief back!

Hope you feel like shit.
It's what you deserve.

UP TO MY ELBOWS IN JIVE

If I give you this poem
you will read it
with your sensitive insensitivity.
You may criticize the style
but lay you 8 to 5
you will miss the point
if it hurts too much to face it.

And I think that anymore
my whole self
comes under that category.
Fuck the heavy discussion
and rationalizations
on both sides.
YOU RIPPED ME OFF
because you're a chickenshit
and being marginal is not
never having to say you're sorry
for being unable to distinguish
right from wrong.

I'm all for the grayness of life
being recognized
but sometimes there's not time for that
what with today being a killer.
In short
talking to you is
a post-revolutionary ideal at best
and usually just a kick in the ass.

I won't have time for long chatty letters.
If you in person is too close for comfort,
you on paper is too distant for focus.

You talk a good line.
I recognize it.
But experience has changed
the looks of things for me.

I hope
the falls you'll surely take
leave you
neither
too crippled to get up
nor
too able to run away.

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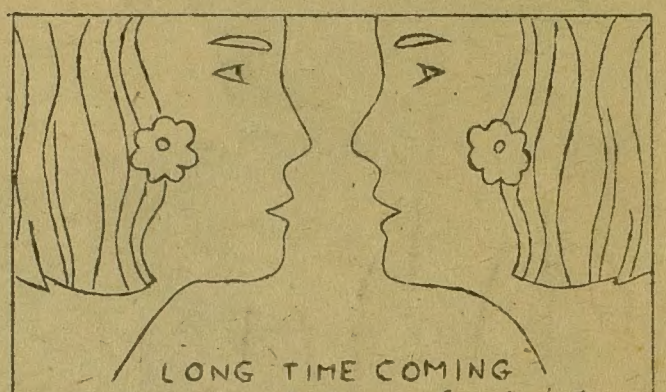

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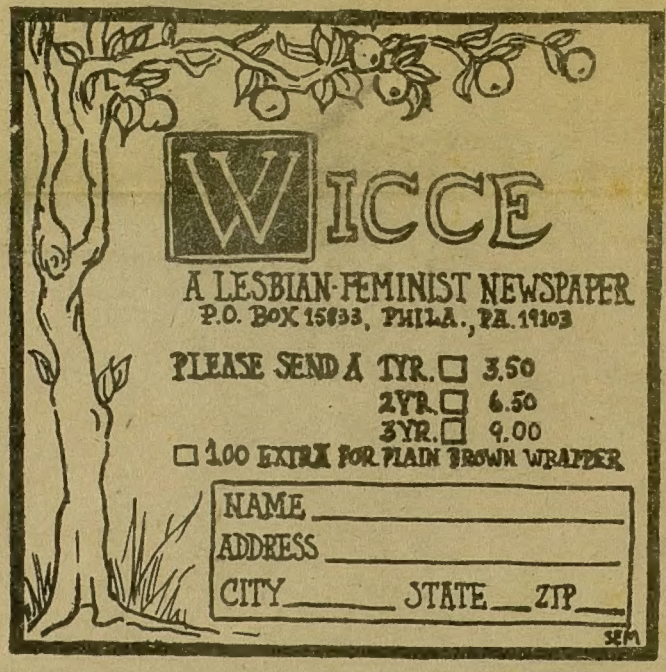

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